

# The Campaign for College Opportunity



**Turning College Students Away:**

**The Consequence of**

**California's Broken Promise**



Every California student who is motivated and prepared to attend college should have that opportunity. All Californians can agree on this.

### Overview

In 1960, the State of California instituted the Master Plan for Higher Education—a promise that every student wishing to pursue a college education would have access to a public college or university. Implementing this visionary educational promise contributed to the state’s economic competitiveness by providing an educated workforce.

### The Problem

California is experiencing a rapid increase, far above that of other states, in the number of young people of college-going age. At the same time, the capacity of our public community colleges and universities is shrinking because of state budget cuts. Furthermore, the Legislature has declared that it will

### Enrollment Decline in Community Colleges

Enrollment Fall 2002	1,744,143
Enrollment Fall 2003	1,653,448
Enrollment Decline	90,695

SOURCE: CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

not fund enrollment growth at either the University of California or the California State University in 2004-2005. Community college enrollment dropped by 90,000 between the years 2002 and 2003, largely because of class cancellations forced by these state budget cuts.

Without public notice, and certainly without public debate, the promise of the state’s Master Plan for Higher Education is now being repealed in California in the face of an increasing number of students qualified and motivated to enroll. Thus, when it comes to providing access to college, California is in reverse gear and the gas pedal has been jammed all the way to the floor.

### About the Campaign for College Opportunity

The Campaign for College Opportunity is a new California non-profit (501(c)(3)) organization solely devoted to ensuring that the next generation of college-age students has the chance to go to college as promised by the Master Plan for Higher Education.

The co-founders of the Campaign are the California Business Roundtable, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, and the Community College League of California.

**The Campaign gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. We also thank the California Business Roundtable for its financial support of this publication.**

**“California ranks 28th among the states in terms of the number of ninth-graders who go on to graduate from college (only 17 out of 100 ninth-grade students). Closing the college door in the face of hundreds of thousands of young Californians who want to go on to higher education will make this dismal situation even worse. That is why I support the Campaign for College Opportunity.”**

—PAT CALLAN, PRESIDENT, THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

## The Consequence

The California State University confronts the likelihood of turning away 20,000 qualified students in 2004-2005 alone. Given historic trends in college participation among students leaving high school and the lack of state funding to meet current student enrollment demands, it is likely that 1,800,000 students will be turned away from our public community colleges and universities between 2004 and 2013.<sup>1</sup> Private

colleges in California will have space for only a small portion of this total.

The number of Californians now likely to be denied a chance for college during the next 10 years is comparable to the total current enrollment of all of the community colleges, the California State University and the University of California.

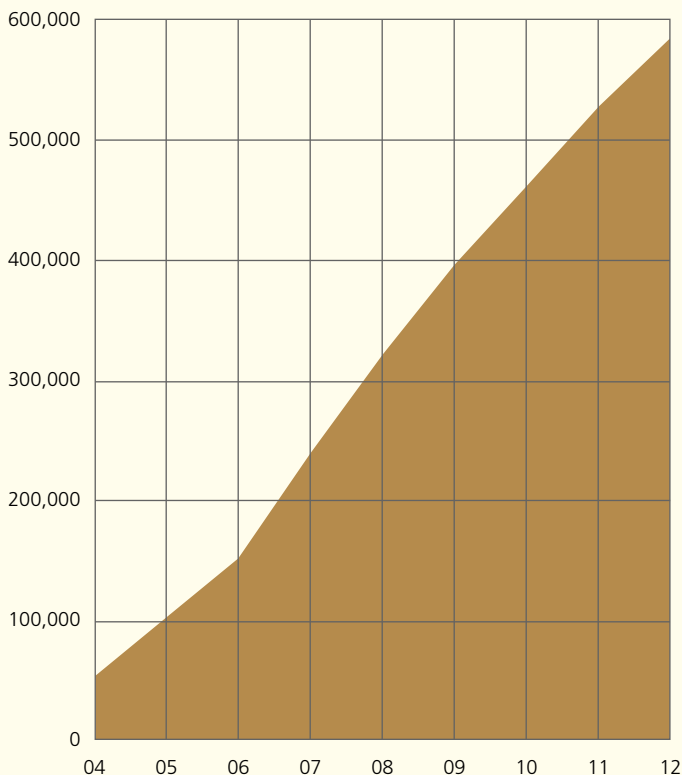
Of this total number, approximately 1,350,000 students would start their college education at the community colleges if given the chance, 350,000 students at a California State

University and 80,000 students at the University of California. Many of those students likely to be excluded will be from low-income families, and a majority will be from communities of color.

## The Urgency

The Campaign for College Opportunity is sounding the alarm, alerting citizens to the crisis in our midst. We believe that properly informed, the people of California will insist upon maintaining the promise of college opportunity and create the necessary pressure so that state-level elected officials will act. The magnitude of the problem is now clear enough that all parties should be willing to come to the table to work out a consensus solution.

### Californians Likely to be Denied a Chance for College



SOURCE: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

If California does not insist upon maintaining its promise of college opportunity, nearly two million students will be denied access to our public community colleges and universities between 2004 and 2013.

<sup>1</sup> This estimate provided by Stacy Wilson, Senior Policy Analyst at the California Postsecondary Education Commission.

*“Think in practical terms. Who will provide us with healthcare services 10 or 15 years from now if we don’t educate our young people for jobs as nurses, lab technicians, and doctors?”*

—BRUCE G. BODAKEN,  
CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENT & CEO,  
BLUE SHIELD OF CALIFORNIA

### Why This Problem Can’t Wait

The Campaign for College Opportunity is not alone in understanding the urgency of this crisis. Experts on the future of California<sup>2</sup> agree that the problem of college access demands immediate attention for three reasons:

#### ■ Growing Demand for Educated Workers

Maintaining student access to higher education is essential to the economic prosperity of California in an era when more and more good jobs demand college-level preparation (either in terms of completing the associates or baccalaureate degree, or a vocational program in fields such as nursing.) Over the next decade, 83 percent of the jobs in the 30 fastest growing occupations in the United States will require some postsecondary education or training. Almost one-half of these jobs will require a bachelors or more advanced degree.

#### ■ Widening Divide Between Rich and Poor

The chasm in the standard of living between the rich and poor (including the working poor) has grown wider in recent years. Limiting college access will make this problem even worse. In a time of growing economic disparity between the rich and the poor, completing a college education is the only road to an economically secure life.

The gap between the lifetime earnings of an average high school graduate and an average college graduate now exceeds one million dollars.

#### ■ College as Academic Motivation for High School Achievement

The key motivator for high school students is the knowledge that a solid academic record will prepare them for college opportunities that really exist. Efforts to achieve higher educational standards in public elementary and high schools will be seriously undercut if students know that taking the right courses and getting good grades will not be rewarded by the opportunity to go to college.



<sup>2</sup> California Postsecondary Education Commission, Providing for Progress: California Higher Education Enrollment Demand and Resources Into the 21st Century, Commission Report 00-1, February 2000, Sacramento, CA.

California Citizens Commission on Higher Education, Final Report, Toward a State of Learning: California Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century, March 1999, Los Angeles, CA.

Council for Aid to Education of the Rand Corporation, Breaking the Social Contract: The Fiscal Crisis in California Higher Education, February 1998, New York, NY.

California Higher Education Policy Center, Shared Responsibility: Strategies to Enhance Quality and Opportunity in California Higher Education, Center Report #96-3, May 1996, San Jose, CA.

## Tidal Wave II

*“It is vital to the California economy and to the quality of life in our state that we educate all the young people in our state for the jobs that exist today and will exist tomorrow. For that reason, it is critically important that the Campaign for College Opportunity succeeds in reaching its goal.”*

—BILL HAUCK, PRESIDENT,  
CALIFORNIA BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

### **A growing number of college-bound students for a shrinking number of spots in public institutions**

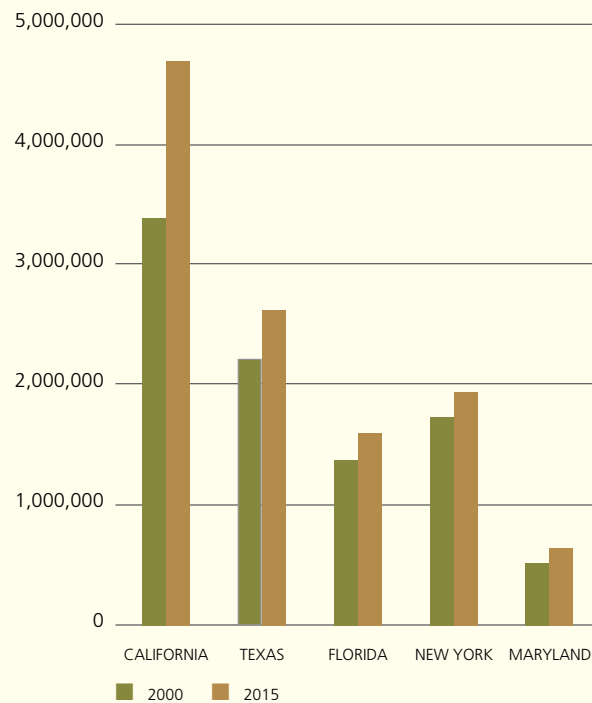
Keeping the Master Plan promise is made more difficult by a remarkably rapid increase in the number of young Californians between the ages of 18 and 24, the traditional college-going age group. Between 2000 and 2015

the number of Californians in this age group is expected to increase from 3,366,000 to 4,718,000, an increase of 1,352,000 over the 15-year period.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, between 2000 and 2015, 40 percent of the total national increase in persons aged 18 to 24 will occur in California—three times larger than California’s share of the national population.

### **Projected Growth in Population — Age 18-24**

TOP FIVE STATES IN PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH



Over the next 10 years, no other state in the nation will face a larger increase in population in the traditional college-going age group than California.

<sup>3</sup> Of course, each year some people enter this age group and some leave it. As a result, the number of young people passing through the 18-24 age range between 2000 and 2015 is much larger than simply the number at the beginning and the end of this time period.

*“One of the greatest challenges I face as a community college president is trying to accommodate Californians who need the opportunities that community college can offer. Years of under-funding, budget cuts and reductions in classes have forced institutions to turn away thousands of students each year. California’s colleges and universities are gateways to California’s economic health. Access to them should be one of the state’s top investments.”*

DR. CONSTANCE M. CARROLL,  
PRESIDENT, SAN DIEGO MESA  
COLLEGE

This enormous change in the profile of our population is known as “Tidal Wave II” (where “Tidal Wave I” refers to the rapid increase in the number of college students in the 1950’s and 1960’s).

### Increasing Ethnic Diversity

Importantly, the ethnic composition of California is also changing. The number of Hispanic students in California’s public schools doubled between 1989 and 2002 and Hispanic

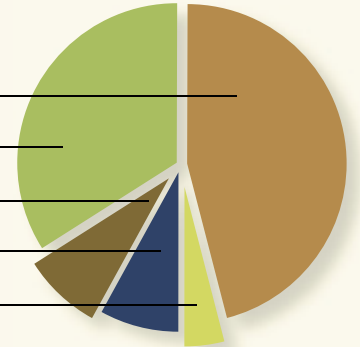
students now represent 45 percent of public school enrollment. By 2012-2013, approximately 70 percent of public school enrollment in our state will be drawn from the Hispanic, Asian and Pacific Islander and African-American communities.

### K-12 Public School Enrollment by Ethnicity

CURRENT AND PROJECTED

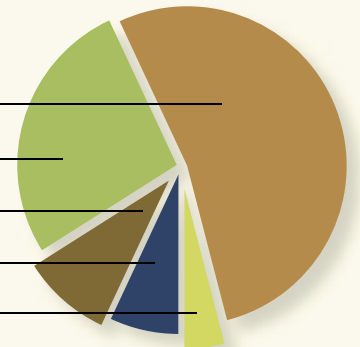
#### 2002-03

Hispanic	45.38%
White	34.15%
Asian	8.17%
Black	8.23%
Other	4.08%



#### 2012-13

Hispanic	52.43%
White	27.25%
Asian	9.09%
Black	6.71%
Other	4.52%



SOURCE: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

By 2013, nearly seventy percent of the children attending public schools in California will be from communities of color. Under present circumstances, many of them will be denied a chance to attend a public college or university.

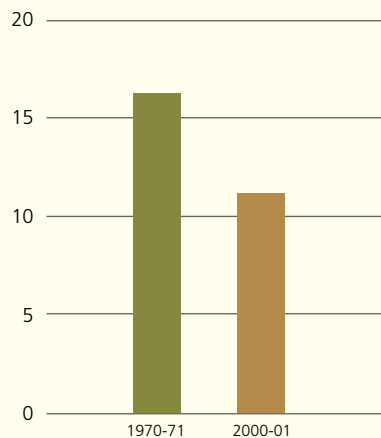




# A Plan of Action

## Higher Education's Share of the State Budget Has Been Shrinking

PERCENT OF STATE GENERAL FUNDS



SOURCE: CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

*“Millions of Californians are working long hours and still can’t afford a decent quality of life for their families. We have to provide educational opportunities, and especially the chance to go to college, to help meet this crisis.”*

—ELISEO MEDINA, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO

## Our proposed three-part solution

Is there a way to provide the college opportunity promised by the Master Plan? Yes, but it won’t be easy. Three steps are required:

### ■ Increase Educational Funding

The state government must significantly increase its investment in higher education with a focus on meeting the educational needs of Tidal Wave II.<sup>4</sup> The likely costs of meeting this challenge over the next decade, on an annual basis, average between two and four percent of the current state budget per year, depending upon many factors, including future levels of tuition.<sup>5</sup>

### ■ Increase Efficiency of Existing Resources

Individual campuses must maximize efficient use of resources, including physical facilities. Campuses must collaborate to provide baccalaureate degree courses taught by University faculty on community college campuses. We need smarter ways to organize instruction, including careful experimentation with electronically mediated courses, while recognizing that top flight, full-time faculty are critical to the quality

of any educational institution. In exchange for greater state financial support, campuses should attain higher rates of success among students who enroll as measured by transfer rates from two-year to four-year institutions, job placement and graduation rates. We must clearly establish a top priority to serve those students whose only hope for social mobility and a better life depends upon succeeding in college.

### ■ Match Student Costs More Closely to Ability to Pay

By deriving more net financial contributions from those students and families that can afford to pay more, we can generate increased revenues to make access for all students possible. Students and families who can afford to pay a larger portion of the costs of their own higher education should do so while the availability of financial aid for truly needy students is strengthened.<sup>6</sup> Thus, what students and families pay for college should be more closely tied to their ability to pay.

<sup>4</sup> While additional funds are needed both for operating purposes and capital costs, a portion of the latter problem has already been solved: voters in 36 of the 72 community college districts have been asked and have approved \$7.5 billion in bonds for community college renovation and expansion in the last two years. Additional local bond issues are on the ballot in 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Over the past 30 years the proportion of the California state budget devoted to higher education has been declining. If California could restore the earlier proportion of the state budget spent on higher education, then the money needed to educate Tidal Wave II would be in hand.

<sup>6</sup> California’s community colleges enroll many more students than either the California State University (CSU) or the University of California (UC). The community colleges are open admissions institutions and, thus, serve students who need the most educational assistance. At the same time, the level of state support per full-time equivalent student in the California community colleges is substantially below the national average. It is also the case that California has the lowest community college tuition in the nation. And, unlike the CSU and UC, the revenue from community college tuition is not returned to the campuses to improve the quality of education but reverts to the state treasury to help balance the state budget.

# The Campaign for College Opportunity: Our Objectives and Challenges

*“Let’s not turn a blind eye to the enormous wealth of talent that exists among students with limited financial resources. Instead, let’s give them the chance to become college educated and we will all profit from their gifts. That’s why the Campaign for College Opportunity has my full support.”*

—ANTONIA HERNANDEZ,  
PRESIDENT AND GENERAL  
COUNSEL, MEXICAN AMERICAN  
LEGAL DEFENSE AND  
EDUCATIONAL FUND

The Campaign for College Opportunity exists to inspire action. Some think the state’s dire financial condition is the reason for inaction. But even when the state had budget surpluses at the end of the 1990’s no effective plan was developed. Therefore, the Campaign aims to inspire leadership on this issue in the state capitol where such leadership has been missing over the past decade.

But perhaps the greatest challenge is that the solution outlined above is controversial and requires compromise and sacrifice from several different quarters. Spending more money for higher education, even though it would represent only about two to four percent of the annual budget over the next 10 years, is not appealing to taxpayers. Finding fresh approaches to operating colleges and universities more efficiently and effectively will test trustees, administrators and faculty. And many Californians, especially those concerned about equality of educational opportunity, are worried about the consequences of raising student fees and rightly insist that higher student tuition must be accompanied by more need-based financial aid.<sup>7</sup>

## **The Campaign’s work is focused on three major endeavors:**

- To raise public awareness of the denial of college access and to stimulate public pressure on the state government and public systems of higher education to respond promptly and constructively.
- To help develop alternative courses of action by state government and the campuses consistent with the three principles listed above: more state funding, more efficiency and clearer educational priorities on the part of the campuses, and more net financial contributions from students and their families.
- To form statewide and supporting regional coalitions to help shape the alternative courses of action; to achieve a consensus as to the precise blueprint to be followed; and then, in close collaboration with state legislators and the Governor, to make sure that the blueprint is translated into reality. The coalition brought together by the Campaign must embrace business, labor, groups representing communities of color,

<sup>7</sup> It is also critical that the availability of that aid be effectively communicated to students and their families well before high school graduation so that student aspirations to attend college can be nurtured and supported.



*jobs are moving outside the U.S., as have manufacturing jobs in the past. But with a strong educational and research base in science and technology in California, we can create good, high skill jobs that will stay in the state. For that to happen, it’s imperative that we prepare an adequate number of students for college and ensure that they graduate. The Campaign for College Opportunity will help make this happen.”*

—KARL S. PISTER, CHAIRMAN OF  
THE BOARD, CALIFORNIA COUNCIL  
ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

major civic organizations (such as the League of Women Voters), Republicans and Democrats, leaders at all levels of education including faculty and students, education reform groups, and religious leaders drawn from throughout the state.

### **How Long Will It Take?**

This work cannot be accomplished either quickly or easily. Our estimate is that a sustained effort over a five-year period will be required. This estimate is strongly influenced by the amount of time necessary for California state revenues to recover from the current recession and the substantial borrowing from future revenues inherent in current proposed solutions to the enormous state budget deficit.

### **We Can Revive the College Promise for the Students of 2007**

Realistically, this means that hundreds of thousands of students will be deprived of their college opportunity in the next several years. However, the Campaign for College Opportunity can affect the course of events soon enough to revive the promise of the Master Plan for the largest proportion of the next generation of college students who will seek admission to higher education in the period beginning in 2007.

### **Help Build a Coalition**

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation has made an initial grant to the Campaign and additional support is anticipated in the near future from other major foundations. The Campaign, with a small staff and many volunteers, is now organizing a public information effort and forming the statewide and regional coalitions.



*“All parents want better futures for their children; but citizens’ choices shape whether those futures are possible. If Californians choose to turn today’s young people away from college and a chance for a better life, who will suffer the consequences?”*

*We all will.”*

—JEANNIE OAKES, PRESIDENTIAL  
PROFESSOR & DIRECTOR, UCLA’S  
INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY,  
EDUCATION, & ACCESS

## Conclusion

In 2000, the California Postsecondary Education Commission declared:

“At the outset of the 21st century, California faces the certainty of phenomenal demographic growth and change...Policy makers will be challenged in every quarter to anticipate and respond to these conditions. Decisions made today will shape the lives of all Californians tomorrow. Nowhere is that challenge greater, or the stakes higher in terms of sustaining the state’s future, than in higher education...”

California stands at a crossroads involving demography, scientific and technological advances,

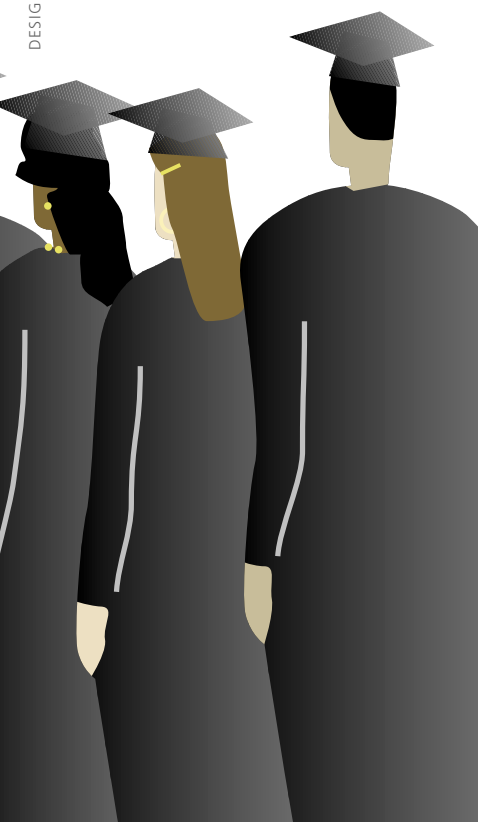
economic transformation, and the basic principles of fairness in our democracy. The achievements of our state were made possible by previous generations who committed themselves to providing a college opportunity for all students, regardless of wealth or family background. We benefited from their sacrifice. The greatness of California can only be realized if we have the wisdom and the determination to keep that promise alive for the generations now coming of age.





*“The future of  
California’s greatness  
may well be measured  
by the number of young  
people we educate. Now  
is the time to put our  
differences aside and  
find consensus.”*

—BARRY MUNITZ, PRESIDENT  
AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,  
J. PAUL GETTY TRUST





*“As a college student  
and mother, I am a  
part of Tidal Wave  
II. I’m concerned  
about this not only  
for myself, but  
if we don’t solve  
the problem, my  
children won’t have  
a chance.”*

—JENNIFER WOLCHICK,  
STUDENT, SANTA ROSA  
JUNIOR COLLEGE

## **The Campaign for College Opportunity**

E-mail: [CollegeOpportun@aol.com](mailto:CollegeOpportun@aol.com)